

Science Project of the Week: Thermite

We here at Prescientifix know that most times, a simple night of dinner, bowling and a movie is enough to cure your boredom. But for those of you who find that tossing a heavy ball at plastic pins just doesn't cut it, we proudly present the world's coolest, most dangerous and totally legal activity: thermite.

Thermite is created by combining a metal powder and metal oxide, which in the presence of an ignition source, produces an extremely hot, stable and non-explosive reaction. Most often, iron oxide and aluminum powder are used, creating molten iron when ignited.

Thermite will melt through almost anything since it burns at nearly half the temperature of the sun!

Here's how to make it:

1. Gather iron oxide powder and aluminum powder in an 8-to-3 ratio, respectively. Most often, Ebay is your best source.
2. Buy a magnesium strip or magnesium-based sparkler (most firework packages contain them).
3. Mix the iron oxide and aluminum powder and stick the magnesium strip or sparkler into it. Light it and get back!

Get creative with the things you melt: flowerpots, books, [blocks of ice](#).

Caution: Only do this on a large, open area of private property. Never stare at the burning thermite from close distances for long periods of time without welding glasses since the reaction also emits large amounts of ultraviolet radiation. Do not try to put out the reaction with water as it will instantly turn to steam and explode.